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COMMITTEE ON NON-GOVERNMENTAL
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Item 5 of the provisional agenda*

# REVIEW OF FUTURE ACTIVITIES

## Report of the Working Group of the Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations

1. At its session in 1991, the Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations, convinced that Economic and Social Council resolution 1296 (XLIV) of 23 May 1968 should continue to be the mandate for its work, decided to establish, within existing resources, a Working Group open to all members of the Committee, as well as other interested States, to prepare, for consideration at the Committee's next session, in 1993, draft guidelines, of a technical nature, aimed at assisting the Committee to fulfil its responsibilities in the most effective manner. It was agreed that the Non-Governmental Organizations Unit, taking into account its resource constraints, should be invited to participate in the Working Group and that the non-governmental organizations should have an opportunity to express their views through the Conference of Non-Governmental Organizations in Consultative Status with the Economic and Social Council (CONGO). In accordance with the past practice of the Committee, the Working Group would conduct its work on the basis of consensus. The Chairman was requested, in consultation with the members of the Bureau, to convene a meeting of the Working Group and to ensure that the Group concluded its work and circulated any proposals to the members of the Committee no later than 1 June 1992. 1/

2. The Working Group held three meetings, on 28 May 1991, 8 October 1991 and 7 April 1992, under the chairmanship of Annie Marie Sundbom (Sweden), Chairman of the Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations.

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* E/C.2/1993/1.

3. The Working Group agreed to recommend that the Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations adopt the guidelines contained in the annex to the present report.

## Notes

1/ See the report of the Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations on its 1991 session (E/1991/20), para. 49.

Annex

GUIDELINES FOR NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS APPLYING FOR CONSULTATIVE STATUS OR RECLASSIFICATION OF STATUS WITH THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL

In order to apply for consultative status, non-governmental organizations must meet the following criteria, based on Economic and Social Council resolution 1296 (XLIV) of 23 May 1968:

Economic and Social Council resolution 1296 (XLIV)

Paragraph 3 — "The organization shall undertake to support the work of the United Nations ...". Status is granted only to non-governmental organizations that can make a significant contribution to the United Nations through their expertise. Therefore status with the Economic and Social Council should not be sought as a means for an organization to gain prestige or to obtain financial support from the United Nations.

Paragraph 4 — An organization will be considered international if it is active in at least two countries in different regions of the world, provided the organization has branches in those two countries and not just individual members.

"Recognized international standing" implies that an organization should have been in existence for at least three years before seeking consultative status. It should show evidence of having worked with United Nations programmes or offices concerned with economic and social issues and of making the type of contributions called for in paragraph 14 of Council resolution 1296 (XLIV). Three years shall be determined on 31 December of the year preceding a session of the Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations (i.e., the organization should have been in existence for three years as at 31 December 1994 for the 1995 session of the Committee).

To demonstrate its "representative character", the organization should have evidence that it has held at least two general membership meetings (assemblies, conferences etc.) before seeking consultative status.

Paragraphs 5-7 — Schools, universities and similar institutions, political parties, for-profit corporations, businesses or consulting firms, religious faiths, churches, orders as well as sects or cults (as differentiated from religious councils and lay bodies) are not acceptable as non-governmental organizations.

Paragraph 8 — Government contributions or government agency contributions should not be the only or major source of revenue of an organization, nor should an organization receive all of its funding from a single government source.

Paragraph 9 — Any national organization affiliated to an international non-governmental organization working in the same field, covering the same subject, should not apply for consultative status.

In order for a national organization to be granted status, it must demonstrate that (a) its programme of work is international in scope or (b) it has a particular competence that international organizations working in the same field, already in status with the Economic and Social Council, do not have.

Any organization that is of a local character, a fortiori, would not meet the criteria for the establishment of consultative status.

On receiving an application from a national organization, the United Nations Secretariat consults with the Member State concerned. It then submits the application and any comments received from that Member State to the Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations for consideration.

Paragraph 11 — An organization whose field of competence falls wholly within the field of a specialized agency of the United Nations should not seek or be granted consultative status with the Economic and Social Council. Such an organization should seek status with that specialized agency. This will not affect the application of paragraph 19 of Council resolution 1296 (XLIV).

Paragraph 40 (a) The Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations now meets biennially, hence a request for a change in status shall be considered by the Committee at the earliest at the second session following the session at which the substance of the previous application or request was considered (e.g., a request for reclassification by non-governmental organizations granted status by the Committee at its 1991 session will be considered by the Committee at the earliest at its 1995 session).

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In addition to Economic and Social Council resolution 1296 (XLIV), the following decisions are relevant for organizations seeking consultative status with the Council: Economic and Social Council resolution 1982/16 and the decision taken by the Committee at its special session in 1984 (see E/1984/29, para. 10).

All organizations with chapters in the Republic of South Africa will be requested to state the attitude of such chapters towards apartheid and whether this attitude is reflected in the organization as a whole.

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